

Poignant Things by Vethysnia

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Summary: A genre-diverse Stranger Things flash fanfiction series.

1. Weight

It was as though she had never heard of real names, like Mike or Dustin or Lucas, never knew people could have titles other than merely a cold, sterile number.

And yet, as she now existed outside the walls of her prison, her name held a strange, mythical sort of weight.

Lost in his thoughts, numb with stress, Mike was hazily contemplative as they traversed the woods in silence, the four of them seeking to make it home before sunset.

When Dustin and Lucas parted, Mike and El continued back to the Wheeler household. The temperature steadily dropped as the sun disappeared behind the grand horizon, and Mike felt a harsh chill course through his body.

He blew into his hands and rubbed them together, his breath turning to a soft cloud as it escaped his lips.

"God, it's *cold*." He said exasperatedly, quickening his pace. "Aren't you cold?"

Eleven's denim jacket was thin and poorly insulated, but she shook her head.

"Here, take mine. I can last until we get home at least."

She shook her head more resolutely. "Mike."

He found himself silenced by her very acknowledgment, his name laced with warning not to push further. She had found her freedom, but he could understand how adamant she was that she was not a burden on others if she could absolutely help it.

"O-okay...whatever, that's fine." He said quickly, hating when his tactlessness reared its ugly head.

They continued to walk together, initially in silence, before Eleven's hand reached for his, inviting his grasp into hers.

"Mike."

With eyes fluttering awkwardly and cheeks flushing with rouge, he quietly took her hand.

His name sounded strange on her tongue. Only when she spoke it, did it have such telltale weight.

2. Four Soft Prompts

1. three tiered dreamcatcher
2. valor
3. ruffles and skin
4. call me when the rain ends

I. He was afraid; only for Eleven's safety, always for how well she was being treated.

She deserved a tender life after all this time.

Mike no longer feared decay and obscurity because of her.

A living three tiered dreamcatcher, she haunted his dreams in dark, soothing ways, engulfed in shadow and no less radiant.

II. His initial prejudice was admittedly a product of the time, but that was still no excuse.

Eleven was smarter, tougher, and more unique than any other human being Mike had ever met, let alone any girl he had ever met.

Her valor was by far more than any 3.5e monstrosity could withstand.

III. El always felt naked.

The laboratory was cold, sterile, a bleak yet apt reflection of the life which she lived there in confinement.

She would never forget the constant draft through her flimsy hospital gown.

She absentmindedly grasped the thick denim jacket Mike had given her, savoring the feeling of ruffled cloth against her skin.

IV. Mike first saw her in the rain.

Drenched, desperate, terrified, reaching out for help to a humanity who wasn't ready to understand who and what she was.

When she was at his side, life could be crumbling around him and he wouldn't care. But in her absence there was a constant storm.